

Winds of Foreign Policy Blow Variouslly at Bonn

By Anatole Shub

Washington Post Foreign Service

BONN, March 22 — West German foreign policy was spinning like a weather vane again today, but it seemed impossible to tell which way the wind was really blowing.

Less than 24 hours after former Chancellor Adenauer had told the Christian Democratic national convention that the Soviet Union wants peace, Chancellor Erhard told the same audience this morning that he doubts it.

Adenauer had cited the Tashkent agreement as evidence of a change in Russian attitudes. Erhard accepted this as an accomplishment, but added: "We would all welcome it if Moscow made such efforts in our own part of the world." The German question, he said, is the decisive test of whether Soviet policy would serve world peace.

Distinction Made

The assembled Christian Democrats applauded Erhard, as they had Adenauer yesterday, and as they did, later this afternoon, parliamentary leader Rainer Barzel, who on the whole picked up the Adenauer line.

Distinguishing between Soviet Communist ideology and eternal Russia, Barzel said: "We must never forget that Moscow is a part of Europe, and that in fact, despite everything, there is much that unites the German and Russian peoples."

While Erhard laid emphasis on the Soviet Union's recognizing the German right to self-determination, Barzel declared that "we have offered Moscow, as a price for easing reunification, more in the economic field, than (East Germany) can or ever will."

Similar differences between

the two speeches were apparent in their treatment of France, the Common Market and reform of NATO, although both Erhard and Barzel were far more conciliatory toward France than Foreign Minister Schroeder in last week's parliamentary debate.

What was uncertain in these varying emphases was whether any of the German leaders were in fact responding to new external developments or were simply using foreign policy as a ploy in the internal struggle within the CDU. Both Adenauer and Barzel did in effect move closer to the standpoint of President de Gaulle on East-West relations, but there was as yet no sign that their surprisingly conciliatory attitude toward the Soviet Union was based on any Soviet overture or had found any Soviet echo.

On the other hand, Adenauer and Barzel did succeed in maneuvering Erhard into the position of appearing less interested than they in a relaxation of tensions—a maneuver that may hurt the Chancellor in his relations both with Parliament and with various Western allies.

Alignments Emerging

In fact, the internal alignments seemed to be emerging more clearly than any foreign-policy evolution. To counter Adenauer, Barzel and the CDU Young Turks from the Rhineland, Erhard today began preparing the way for the return of Franz-Josef Strauss to the Cabinet.

Amid strong applause, he said he would welcome it if Strauss "had, and accepted, the opportunity to take part, more strongly than until now, in the consideration and decision of . . . daily political questions."

He also reminded the Free

Democrats, minor partners in the government coalition and Strauss's chief foes, that they had received only 9 per cent of the vote in last September's election as against 47 per cent for the CDU.

Although Strauss, as leader of Bavaria's quasi-autonomous Christian Social Union, is not a delegate to the convention, his brief "fraternal greeting" yesterday provoked greater enthusiasm and longer and stronger applause than Adenauer, Erhard, Barzel or any of the other speakers these last two days.

The convention closes Wednesday with the election of a new Party Presidium, as well as further speeches on foreign policy. It is not yet known whether Foreign Minister Schroeder, who leaves Thursday for official visits to Spain and Portugal, will take part in the discussion.